

**REMARKS**

This Amendment, filed in reply to the Office Action dated September 21, 2005, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 remain pending the application. Claims 9-14, 17 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mueller et al. (U.S.P. 6,373,074) in view of Endriz (U.S.P. 5,594,752) and Ishiwata (U.S.P. 6,157,756). Claims 1-8, 15 and 16 are allowed. To expedite allowance of this case, Applicant hereinabove cancels claims 9-14, 17 and 18 without prejudice or disclaimer. The pending claims 1-8, and 15-16 should be allowed in due course.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116  
Appln. No.: 09/939,659

**Attorney Docket No.: Q65937**

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

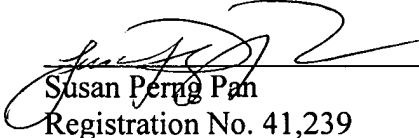
Respectfully submitted,

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WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

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Date: March 16, 2006